

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

January 23, 1998 LB 656

CLERK: Madam President, 656, a bill originally introduced by Senator Beutler. (Read title.) Bill was introduced on January 22 of last year, at that time referred to Natural Resources, advanced to General File. There are committee amendments pending, Madam President.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Chair recognizes Senator Jones to open on the bill.

SENATOR JONES: Yes, Madam President and members of the body. (LB) 656, this deals with the federal Niobrara Scenic River Designation Act, and this is 76 miles of river that all is in my district going through Cherry, Brown, Keya Paha, and Rock. This is a federal designation, but they say we can have local control if we have a local council and show some good faith that we're going to get something started as far as a management plan. The council is all in place and have had several meeting so far. This request for the start-up money came from the council. And so they voted 13 to 0 for this request. And you might wonder why and what they need the money for, and there's several things that they really need it for to get started up. They have presented a budget to the federal government, but that won't be able to start for another year so they want us, as local people, to do as much as we can to get this start-up money and get it in place. So that's the reason for the request. But some of the things that they'll be using for, this here request, is for a management plan, clean up along the river, administrator, and a vehicle, and a phone, and insurance, and it'd help the counties repair and try to get something done. This designation was listed several years ago by the federal government and it's just been kind of "hangfired" for all this time. And, anyway, right now, that we are getting somebody in place and I'm passing around a list that everybody should have on their desk now that shows all the council members and how they're represented. There's four...there's three NRDs and there's four county commissioners, Game and Parks, and Fish and Wildlife, and the timber people, and then there's some local people on it too as farmers and ranchers that's going to represent this, so hopefully this is all in place and everything's going to work. They have had a little bit of money that Game and Parks has given \$24,000, and the counties have given \$1,000, but they need